

Please amend the specification as follows:

In the Claims:

16. (amended) A method for forming metallurgical connections between metal wires and bond pads positioned on integrated circuits having copper interconnecting metallization, comprising:

B' depositing seed metal to activate the surface of said copper metallization of said bond pads;

 plating on said seed metal a barrier layer, by electroless deposition, said barrier layer having a thickness of at least about 0.5 μm , said barrier layer selected from a group consisting of nickel, cobalt, chromium, molybdenum, titanium, tungsten, and alloys thereof;

 plating on said barrier layer a bondable layer, by electroless deposition, said bondable layer having a thickness of at least about 0.4 μm , said bondable layer selected from a group consisting of gold, palladium, platinum, and silver; and

 bonding one of said metal wires onto said bondable layer.

18. (amended) The method of Claim 16, wherein said step of plating on said seed metal a barrier layer comprises plating said barrier layer having a thickness in the range of about 0.5 μm to about 1.5 μm .

B2 19. (amended) The method of Claim 16, wherein said step of plating on said barrier layer a bondable layer comprises plating said bondable layer having a thickness in the range of about 0.4 μm to about 1.5 μm .

22. (amended) A method for forming metallurgical connections between metal wires and bond pads positioned on integrated circuits having copper interconnecting metallization, comprising:

B3 depositing palladium seed metal to activate the surface of said copper metallization of said bond pads;